As part of the Office of Missional Engagement, Disaster Recovery fulfills its mission to the local church through specialized trainings, ministry partnerships and opportunities to serve.

Partners in Ministry

United Methodist Committee on Relief

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

As a member of the Florida VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster), the Disaster Recovery Ministry is an active participant with other member organizations and agencies responding to disaster, as well as Volunteer Florida, state and local emergency management and FEMA. By building relationships and sharing information and resources before disaster strikes, we can all be better prepared.

When disaster occurs, the Florida VOAD convenes regular conference calls — often daily — to communicate needs and “right-size” the response. Our goal is to get the right resources to the right place at the right time. Responding agencies do not want to overwhelm a community already reeling from disaster.

The Florida VOAD and its member organizations are committed to the “4 C’s” set forth by National VOAD —

Communication - Cooperation - Coordination - Collaboration

Working together, we can help communities and individuals respond and recover from disaster, being good stewards of resources for the benefit of all.

Mission

To resource and equip local United Methodist Churches and districts as they assist their communities and individuals to prepare, respond and recover from disaster.

As part of the Office of Missional Engagement, Disaster Recovery fulfills its mission to the local church through specialized trainings, ministry partnerships and opportunities to serve.

Serving Local Churches
**Communication, Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration**

Disasters are "locally owned" and local emergency management determines if, and when, outside assistance is needed. Depending on the size and scope of the disaster, outside support may come from surrounding communities and state and federal governments, as well as volunteer and faith-based organizations. Historically, volunteer and faith-based groups have played a vital role in disaster preparation, response and recovery.

The last several years the number of devastating natural disasters in the US has increased: ice storms in Kentucky, flooding in South Dakota, Hurricane Irene on the eastern seaboard, tornados in the southeast and Joplin, and Hurricane Isaac. In the midst of these, the faith-based community has received increased acceptance as a partner with emergency management.

**RIGHT RESOURCES TO THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME**

Several state-wide organizations in Florida work together to coordinate the work responding organizations with emergency management. Volunteer Florida, FIND (Florida Interfaiths Networking in Disaster) and the Florida VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) provide opportunities to learn the strengths of members’ organizations and where they can serve most effectively in disaster.

**WORKING TO “RIGHT-SIZE” THE RESPONSE**

Our cooperation allows us to leverage resources and avoid duplication so more people get the help they need. Effective communication ensures fast and accurate assessment of needs and resources. This allows deployment of volunteer assistance without impeding relief efforts or jeopardizing the safety of volunteers, survivors or the community.

**OUR ROOTS**

The Disaster Recovery Ministry of the Florida Conference started in 2004 to coordinate United Methodist assistance in response to Hurricane Charley. Over the next fourteen months, seven major hurricanes made landfall in Florida, and United Methodists throughout the Conference and beyond, offered immediate relief and short-term recovery from these record-breaking storms. Today, Disaster Recovery Ministry continues to train and deploy volunteers for disaster response and long-term recovery work.

In the "disaster world" United Methodists are known for cooperating with others to find solutions. We are especially recognized for our work in long-term recovery as we serve collaboratively with others, until the last need is met.

In 2009, the Governor of the State of Florida recognized the Disaster Recovery Ministry of the Florida Conference with the Governor’s Humanitarian Award, presented at the Governor’s Hurricane Conference held annually in May. This award honors the hundred of churches and volunteers across the Florida Conference who have reached out to those affected by disaster and continue to do so.

**THE TRANSITION TO LONG-TERM RECOVERY**

Long after the media leaves, Disaster Recovery Ministry and local United Methodist Churches continue supporting communities with strategies for restoration. Long-term recovery groups begin to take shape and case management becomes the cornerstone for assisting families and individuals. Disaster Recovery and local United Methodist churches provide leadership, training, resources and volunteers, to assist communities to recover.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Disaster Recovery Ministry also administers financial donations from churches, individuals and UM COR. Using a grant application process, these monies are used by local long-term recovery groups working with disaster survivors — survivors who have no other means to recover.

**PREPARATION AND TRAINING**

Disaster Recovery Ministry continues to prepare churches to respond in times of disaster and identify opportunities to serve. Our ministry is to the local church, as we facilitate their ability to respond to God’s call and help others in need.

While each disaster is unique, people tend to respond the way they are trained, and the best response is preparation. Disaster Recovery Ministry offers the following trainings:

**Disaster 101: Basic Disaster Ministry Training** offers an overview of the disaster management process and where the local church fits. This training is the foundation for the church’s response to disaster in their community and beyond.

**Early Response Team (ERT) Training** teaches teams how to help disaster survivors be “safe, sanitary and secure,” while waiting for other assistance to arrive.

**Spiritual Response Team (SRT) Training** trains individuals in providing spiritual and emotional support to those affected by disaster.

**Case Management Training** teaches individuals how to help survivors develop an action plan for their recovery.

**Local Church Disaster Workshops** help churches develop a local church plan. Knowing what to do before, during and after a disaster, helps the church be a vital part of your community’s relief and recovery process.

"Well done good and faithful servant..."

Matt 25:23

You will respond to any storm the way you train.